

In the Claims

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1. (Previously Amended) A method for a manufacturer to automate a catalog process, the method comprising:  
creating a catalog of configurable products including at least one of non-commodity products and services; and  
presenting a data file, the data file including the catalog, the presenting via a communication medium to a purchaser, the catalog allowing the purchaser to host the data file and to configure non-commodity products.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the purchaser includes at least one of a customer, a third party acting on behalf of the customer and a supplier.
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3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the manufacturer includes a third party acting on behalf of the manufacturer.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file allows the purchaser to configure the products independent of a third party provided configuration tool.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the presenting includes transmitting the data file to the customer.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the presenting includes hosting the data file on a world wide web interface.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file includes manipulable parameters that enable configuration of non-commodity product or service.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the manipulable parameters include upgrades, downgrades and swapping of components.
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9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file includes non-manipulable parameters that contribute to the configuration of a non-commodity product or service including parent components, orphan components, child components, configuration components and optional components.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file is configured to be incorporated into a procurement system, the data file providing a catalog of configurable components.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein the data file includes business rules in a structured data format.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the business rules include rules for manipulating data including functional rules and configuration rules for integrating the data file into the procurement system.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file includes data shared by the manufacturer and a host of the data file.

14. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file includes a configuration identifier, a price of the configuration, type of components, custom or bundled, upgrades, downgrades and additions permitted with pricing, work flow data identifying add configurations, discontinue configuration, replace configuration, effective data, and a discontinue date.

15. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein the data file includes pricing according to predetermined agreements with the manufacturer and the host.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file includes at least one of factory-installed components, non-factory-installed components, and subsystem configurations.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file includes a core configuration including:

commodity and non-commodity default services; and  
customer-specific integration components.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the customer-specific integration components include customer specific software and menus, images, customer asset tag labels, and security cables.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the customer-specific integration components include at least one of transportation industry options and transportation services.

20. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the factory installed, non-factory installed, customer kit and solution data includes the associated Stock Keeping Units (SKUs), including a third parties or a manufacturer generated SKUs and pricing.

21. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
receiving an acknowledgment file approving configurations within the data file.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein the acknowledgment file includes acknowledging each parameter of configurable products, including components, pricing, services as acceptable and not acceptable.

23. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
transmitting an action code within the data file denoting product configurations requiring replacement in a procurement system, the action code permitting a purchaser receiving the data file to update open orders in the procurement system prior to delivery of an order without manual interaction.

24. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file provides data shared by a purchaser's procurement system and a seller's invoicing system.

25. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file is an (Electronic Data Interchange) EDI format.

26. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic data file is transmitted to the purchaser using an SGML format

27. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic data file is in a proprietary file format.

28. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the data file is periodically updated by the manufacturer to indicate pricing changes and production transactions

29. (Previously Amended) A computer system comprising:

a processor;

a memory coupled to the processor; and

a communications port configured to transmit a data file, the data file including a catalog of configurable products including at least one of non-commodity products and services to be received by a purchaser, the data file enabling the purchaser to incorporate the data file into a procurement system, the catalog allowing the purchaser to host the data file and to configure non-commodity products.

30. (Previously Amended) A system for automating a catalog process, the system comprising:

means for creating a catalog of configurable products including at least one of non-commodity products and services; and

means for presenting a data file, the data file including the catalog, the presenting via a communication medium to a purchaser, the catalog allowing the purchaser to host the data file and to configure non-commodity products.